



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

mn
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|

10/814,551

03/31/2004

Patrick R. Guido

4541-016

7434

24112 7590 06/22/2007
COATS & BENNETT, PLLC
1400 Crescent Green, Suite 300
Cary, NC 27518

EXAMINER

ORR, HENRY W

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2176

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

06/22/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. 10/814,551 | Applicant(s) GUIDO ET AL. | |
| | Examiner Henry Orr | Art Unit 2176 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 March 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 31 March 2004 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to application communication filed on 3/31/204.
2. Claims 1-28 are pending in the case. Claims 1, 14, 19 and 25 are independent claims.

Drawings

3. Figure 1 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
5. **Claims 1-13, 15-18, 20-22 and 25-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.**

Claims 1 and 25:

Independent claims 1 and 25 recite the phrase **“the z-order of windows”**.

There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claims because the phrase has not been previously recited within the respective independent claims.

Claims 2, 4, 16, 18, 26, 28:

Claims 2, 4, 16, 18, 26 and 28 recite the phrase **“the top level z-order”**. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claims because the phrase has not been previously recited in their respective base claims.

Claim 15:

Claim 15 recites the phrase **“an affinity group”**. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim because it is unclear whether **“an affinity group”** in claim 15 is referring to previously recited **“said affinity group”** in base claim 14.

Claims 20 and 22:

Claims 20 and 22 recite the phrase **“the highest z-order level”**. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claims because the phrase has not been previously recited in their respective base claims.

Claims 2-13, 17, 21 and 26-28:

Dependent claims 2-13, 17 and 26-28 are rejected for fully incorporating the deficiencies of their respective base claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. **Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 10-16, 18-20, 22, 25, 26 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ashe, U.S. Patent No. 5,995,103.**

Claim 1:

Ashe teaches a GUI window environment including a plurality of windows (see col. 5 lines 42-49). **(claim 1; i.e., providing a GUI environment including a plurality of windows;)**

Ashe teaches establishing a first affinity group comprising multiple related windows but less than all of said plurality of windows in a GUI environment (see col. 3 lines 1-10, col. 10 lines 29-33) **(claim 1; i.e., establishing, by a user, a first affinity group comprising a subset of two or more but less than all of said plurality of windows in said GUI environment, such that the windows comprising said first affinity group are related;)**

Ashe teaches raising the z-order of windows in said first affinity group above other windows when a window within said first affinity group is selected (see col. 14 lines 60-67 thru col. 15 lines 1-6). **(claim 1; i.e., and raising the z-order of windows**

in said first affinity group above other windows in said GUI environment when any one window in said first affinity group is selected.)

Claim 2:

Ashe teaches raising all windows in said first affinity group to the front of the display screen ("top level z-order") of said GUI environment (see col. 14 lines 60-67 thru col. 15 lines 1-6). **(claim 2; i.e., wherein raising the z-order of windows in said first affinity group above other windows in said GUI environment when any one window in said first affinity group is selected comprises raising all windows in said first affinity group to the top level z-order of said GUI environment.)**

Claim 4:

Ashe raising all other windows in said first affinity group with a priority class to one or more z-order levels below the top level (see col. 2 lines 2-16 and lines 32-37). **(claim 4; i.e., wherein raising the z-order of windows in said first affinity group above other windows in said GUI environment when any one window in said first affinity group is selected comprises raising the selected window to the top level z-order of said GUI environment, and raising all other windows in said first affinity group to one or more z-order levels immediately below the top level.)**

Examiner interprets the other windows within an affinity group to be capable of being displayed at one or more z-order levels immediately below the top level because the other windows within an affinity group can have a lower priority class than the

selected window within the affinity group. Thus, the selected window will be displayed at a higher z-order level than the other windows with a lower priority class within the affinity group (see col. 2 lines 2-16 and lines 32-37).

Claim 5:

Ashe teaches designating an affinity relationship between existing windows in said GUI by the user (see col.11 lines 63-67). **(claim 5; i.e., wherein establishing said first affinity group of windows comprises designating an affinity relationship between existing windows in said GUI by the user.)**

Claim 10:

Ashe teaches creating new windows from existing windows, wherein the existing window and the new window have an affinity group relationship (see col. 9 lines 53-67 thru col. 10 lines 1-14). **(claim 10; i.e., wherein establishing said first affinity group of windows comprises creating one or more new windows from an existing window by the user, said existing window and said new windows having an affinity group relationship.)**

Claim 11:

Ashe teaches creating new windows by executing an affinity group window creation command; wherein the existing window and the new window have an affinity group relationship (see col. 9 lines 53-67 thru col. 10 lines 1-14). **(claim 11; i.e.,**

Art Unit: 2176

wherein creating one or more new windows from an existing window by the user comprises: selecting an existing window; and creating a first new window by executing an affinity group window creation command; whereby said first new window created has an affinity group relationship with said existing window.)

Examiner interprets application program ("existing window") creating a new window to be equivalent to executing an affinity group window creation command as recited in claim 11 because the application program can specify what order the new window will be displayed within an existing affinity group relationship amongst already defined windows belonging to an application program (see col. 9 lines 53-67 thru col. 10 lines 1-14).

Claim 12:

Ashe teaches creating new windows by executing an affinity group window creation command; wherein the existing window and the new window have an affinity group relationship (see col. 9 lines 53-67 thru col. 10 lines 1-14). **(claim 12; i.e., selecting either said existing window or said first new window; and creating a second new window by executing an affinity group window creation command; whereby said second new window created has an affinity group relationship with said existing window and said first new window.)**

Art Unit: 2176

Claim 13:

Ashe teaches a GUI window environment including virtual desktops (see col. 5 lines 42-49). **(claim 13; i.e., wherein said GUI environment includes virtual desktops.)**

Claim 14:

Claim 14 is a method claim and is substantially encompassed in method claim 1; therefore claim 14 is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 1 above. In addition to the rationale of claim 1, Ashe teaches creating multiple affinity groups ("first and second" affinity groups). Thus, Ashe is capable of switching between two or more affinity groups in a GUI environment as recited in claim 14 (see col. 14 lines 1-8).

Claim 15:

Ashe teaches a NewWinGroup method capable of organizing a second affinity group comprising all windows in said GUI environment not yet included in any affinity group (see col.11 lines 63-67).

Claim 16:

Claim 16 is a method claim and is substantially encompassed in method claim 2; therefore claim 16 is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 2 above.

Art Unit: 2176

Claim 18:

Claim 18 is a method claim and is substantially encompassed in method claim 4; therefore claim 18 is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 4 above.

Claim 19:

Claim 19 is a system claim and is substantially encompassed in method claim 1; therefore the system claim is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 1 above.

Claim 20:

Claim 20 is a system claim and is substantially encompassed in method claim 2; therefore the system claim is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 2 above.

Claim 22:

Claim 22 is a system claim and is substantially encompassed in method claim 4; therefore the system claim is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 4 above.

Art Unit: 2176

Claim 25:

Claim 25 includes a program embodied on a computer readable medium to implement the steps that are substantially encompassed in method claim 1; therefore the claim is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 1 above.

Claim 26:

Claim 26 includes a program embodied on a computer readable medium to implement the steps that are substantially encompassed in method claim 2; therefore the claim is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 2 above.

Claim 28:

Claim 28 includes a program embodied on a computer readable medium to implement the steps that are substantially encompassed in method claim 4; therefore the claim is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 4 above.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 2176

9. Claims 3, 17, 21 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ashe as cited above in view Diedrichsen et al. (hereinafter "Diedrichsen"), U.S. Patent No. 5,920,313.

Claim 3:

Ashe fails to expressly teach tiling the windows in said first affinity group. However, Diedrichsen teaches tiling the window objects belonging to a set membership such that said windows may simultaneously occupy the top level z-order of said GUI environment (see col. 7 lines 60-67 thru col. 8 lines 14, Figure 5C and 5D). **(claim 3; i.e., further comprising tiling the windows in said first affinity group such that said windows may simultaneously occupy the top level z-order of said GUI environment.)**

Therefore in the same field of endeavor of associating related user interface objects, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify windows belonging to an affinity group as taught by Ashe to be tiled and result in the windows simultaneously occupying the top level z-order as taught by Diedrichsen to provide the benefit of easily identifying all members of the set ("affinity group") to which a currently selected window object belongs (see Diedrichsen; abstract, col. 3 lines 56-65)

Claim 17:

Claim 17 is a method claim and is substantially encompassed in method claim 3; therefore claim 17 is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 3 above.

Art Unit: 2176

Claim 21:

Claim 21 is a system claim and is substantially encompassed in method claim 3; therefore the system claim is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 3 above.

Claim 27:

Claim 27 includes a program embodied on a computer readable medium to implement the steps that are substantially encompassed in method claim 3; therefore the claim is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 3 above.

10. Claims 6-9, 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ashe as cited above in view Haynes (hereinafter "Haynes"), U.S. Published Application No. 2005/0198585 A1.

Claims 6 and 7:

Ashe fails to expressly teach designating an affinity relationship using a drag and drop technique as recited in claims 6 and 7.

However, Haynes teaches designating a relationship using a drag and drop technique as cited in claims 6 and 7 (see par. 19, claims 13 and 14, Figure 3).

(claim 6; i.e., wherein designating an affinity relationship between existing windows by the user comprises: selecting a first window; dragging said first window to an affinity group icon on a second window; and dropping said first

window on said affinity group icon of said second window, thereby establishing an affinity group relationship between said first and second window.)

(claim 7; i.e., selecting a third window; dragging said third window to an affinity group icon on either said first or second window; and dropping said third window on said affinity group icon of said first or second window, thereby adding said third window to said affinity group.)

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the grouping of windows to established an affinity relationship as taught by Ashe to include a drag and drop technique as taught by Haynes to provide the benefit of easily forming the desired windows into a related group (see Haynes; par. 19, Figure 3).

Claims 8 and 9:

Ashe fails to expressly teach designating an affinity relationship using a keystroke combination technique as recited in claims 8 and 9.

However, Haynes teaches designating a relationship using a keystroke combination technique as cited in claims 8 and 9 (see par. 19, claims 15 and 16, Figure 3). **(claim 8; i.e., wherein designating an affinity relationship between existing windows by the user comprises: selecting a first window; executing a first keystroke combination in said first window; selecting a second window; and executing a second keystroke combination in said second window, thereby**

establishing an affinity group relationship between said first and second window.)

(claim 9; i.e., selecting a third window; executing said first keystroke combination in said third window; selecting either said first or second window; and executing said second keystroke combination in said selected first or second window, thereby adding said third window to said affinity group.)

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the grouping of windows to established an affinity relationship as taught by Ashe to include a keystroke combination technique as taught by Haynes to provide the benefit of easily forming the desired windows into a related group (see Haynes; par. 19, Figure 3).

Claim 23:

Claim 23 is a system claim and is substantially encompassed in method claim 6; therefore the system claim is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 6 above.

Claim 24:

Claim 24 is a system claim and is substantially encompassed in method claim 8; therefore the system claim is rejected under the same rationale as method claim 8 above.

Conclusion

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Henry Orr whose telephone number is (571) 270 1308. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday 8 to 4.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Doug Hutton can be reached on (571) 272-4137. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

6/18/2007
HO



**Doug Hutton
Primary Examiner
Technology Center 2100**